



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE  
3040 Biddle Road  
Medford, Oregon 97504  
email address: orll0mb@or.blm.gov

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1792(117)

The Grave Creek Boat Landing  
Improvement Project  
G6247(JK:bhk)

JUN 5 2002

Dear Interested Citizen:

The Grants Pass Resource Area, Medford District of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has recently completed the planning and an environmental assessment (EA) for the Grave Creek Boat Landing Improvement Project. The Grave Creek Boat Landing is located on BLM administered lands within the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River Corridor in Josephine County. A vicinity map showing the project location is enclosed. The Grave Creek Boat Landing Improvement Project proposes (a) access road improvement, (b) parking/turning area improvement, (c) rock slide stabilization, (d) Ajax Gulch trail crossing improvement, (e) garbage receptacle installation, (f) boat launch ramp expansion, and (g) parking restrictions to reduce congestion at the landing. These potential improvements would increase the safety and efficiency of the landing and launch area.

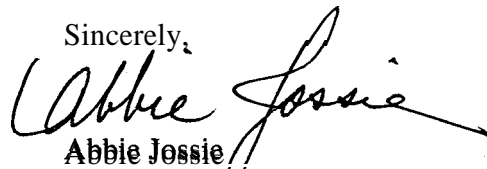
We have placed the EA on our web site ([www.or.blm.gov/Medford](http://www.or.blm.gov/Medford)) under planning documents/ environmental assessments should you wish to review and comment on it. If you do not have Internet access and would like to receive a paper copy of the EA, we will be happy to send you one upon request. The comment period will end on **June 28, 2002**.

Should you have questions about the project that are not addressed in the EA, please contact John Bethea at (541) 618-2246. John is our project planning team leader. If you would like to comment on the EA, please send them to me at the above address or e-mail them to us at [orll0mb@or.blm.gov](mailto:orll0mb@or.blm.gov). As we make our decisions regarding the project, we will consider all pertinent site specific comments. Comments that clearly articulate site specific issues or concerns are most useful to us.

If you would like to comment but confidentiality is of concern to you, you may request that we withhold your name and/or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. Please state this clearly at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All comments received from organizations or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

We appreciate your interest and involvement in this project and thank you for your continuing interest in the resource management activities of the BLM and the Grants Pass Resource Area..

Sincerely,

  
Abbie Jossie  
Field Manager  
Grants Pass Resource Area

Enclosure (as stated)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

for the

***Grave Creek Boat Landing Improvement Project***

(EA # OR 110-02-08)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT  
GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA

*May 24, 2002*

Dear Reader:

We appreciate your interest in the BLM's public land management activities. We also appreciate your taking the time to review this environmental assessment (EA). If you would like to provide us with written comments regarding this project or this environmental assessment (EA), please send them to me at Bureau of Land Management, 3040 Biddle Road, Medford, OR 97504. If you would like to email your comments, you can send them to me at *or110mb@or.blm.gov*.

If you would like to comment but confidentiality is of concern to you, please be aware that comments, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review and may be published as part of the EA or other related documents or may be held in a file available for public inspection and review. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or street address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must clearly state this at the beginning of your written comment. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or officials of organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Abbie Jossie  
Field Manager  
Grants Pass Resource Area

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
MEDFORD DISTRICT

EA COVER SHEET

RESOURCE AREA: *Grants Pass*

FY & REPORT # EA Number OR-110-02-08

ACTION/TITLE: ***Grave Creek Boat Landing Improvement Project***

LOCATION: *T. 33S, R8W, Sec. 1, Willamette Meridian*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:      Abbie Jossie  
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# GRANTS PASS RESOURCE AREA

## "Grave Creek Boat Landing Improvement Project"

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Purpose and Need for Action and Alternatives**

#### **A. Introduction and Need for the Proposal**

##### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this environmental assessment (EA) is to assist in the decision-making process by assessing the environmental and human affects resulting from implementing the proposed project and/or alternatives. The EA will also assist in determining if an environmental impact statement (EIS) needs to be prepared or if a finding of no significant impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

This EA tiers to: (1) the Final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) dated June 1995 for the Medford District Resource Management Plan (October 1994); (2) the Final Supplemental EIS on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (February 1994); (3) the Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and its Attachment A entitled the Standards and Guidelines for Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl (April 13, 1994); and (4) the Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manager, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (January 2001).

The proposals area also based on, and consistent with the following river management plans: (1) Activity Plan for the Hellgate Recreation Section “Rogue National Wild & Scenic River” (November 1978); and (2) the “Hellgate Recreation Area Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement” (November 2000).

##### **2. Need for the Proposal**

A number of safety related issues currently exist at the Grave Creek Boat Landing and access road. There has been an ongoing management concern about these safety issues.

The Grave Creek Boat Landing is located at the end of the Recreation Section and the beginning of the Wild Section of the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River corridor. During the peak high use season, many different user groups simultaneously try to access and use the Grave Creek Boat Landing. Boaters of all types use this facility as a “takeout” after trips on the Recreation Section and as a “put in” for the downstream Wild Section. Boaters, sightseers, day-use trail hikers and anglers compete for limited parking spaces and boat ramp use.

Annual winter high water flows often “rearrange” the unpaved portions of the landing that are used as staging areas for boaters and for parking/maneuvering areas for vehicles. The landing area is limited and use and parking create can make it very congested. The access road to the launch site narrows to a single lane and is without guard rails.

The National Rogue River Trail head is located at the downstream end of the parking area. Ajax Gulch crosses the trail at this point. After heavy winter rains, run off water swells Ajax gulch causing erosion of the trail and parking area.

## **B. Scoping Issues Relevant to the Proposal**

Several major issues of potential concern were raised by the planning team and by the public during the scoping phase of project planning. They are:

1. Consistency of landing improvement with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the outstandingly remarkable values that lead to the rivers designation.
2. Potential impact of the project on cultural or archeological features.
3. Consistency with Section 404 “Clean Waters Act”: Discharge fill into clean waters.
4. Impact of the proposed project on the “view” as seen from the river and road, particularly as it relates to the installation of a guard rail along the access road.
5. Potential impact on the “recreational experience.”
6. Potential disruption to ramp use during upgrade work.
7. Funding aspects of the proposal project as it relates to the Fee Demonstration program.
8. The potential for increased landing, trail and road use as a result of improving the landing.
9. Consistency of the project with the Clean Water Act and the Northwest Forest Plan’s Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

## **C. Proposed Action and/or Alternatives**

1. Alternative 1: No Action Alternative

In this EA the "no-action" alternative is defined as not implementing any aspect of the proposed action alternatives. Defined this way, the no action alternative also serves as a baseline or reference point for evaluating the environmental effects of the action alternatives. Inclusion of this alternative is done without regard to whether or not it is consistent with the Medford District RMP. Current levels of annual road and site maintenance would continue.

The no action alternative is not a "static" alternative. Implicit in it is a continuation of the environmental conditions and trends that currently exist or are occurring within the project area. This includes trends such as vegetation succession, annual flooding, road condition / deterioration, rates of erosion, continuation of current road densities, trends in fire hazard changes, OHV use, *etc.*.



## 2. Alternative 2: Landing and Access Road Improvement

The proposed alternative is comprised of six elements.

### a. Access road improvement

The existing 630' long access road would be widened at the entrance and at several of the narrower points along its length. This includes brushing the entire length as needed and grading in turnouts. No blasting is anticipated.

Placing a guardrail on the outside of the entire 630' long access road. The guardrail would be made of weathering steel ("Core Ten" steel) that develops a surface rust and would be supported by 8"x8" pressure treated post spaced every 6.25'. The rust color would greatly reduce any glare or reflection.

### b. Parking / turning area improvement

The existing concrete parking area would be expanded to the north and east. This would require leveling out the area by using excavating equipment to move approximately 350 yards of material from high areas to low areas. If temporary fill is needed, a 2" surface of clean river-run rock (approximately 54 yards of 3/4" minus) would be used to be maintained a good surface until the permanent concrete parking area slab can be poured. The approximate amount of concrete that will be needed for the parking area is 142 cubic yards to create a 6" reinforced slab. Molding or wrapping the edges of the concrete into the existing bedrock and/or using large rocks as an edge on the Rogue River side and Ajax Gulch side would be done to help prevent the lifting effects caused by high water and to create a gentler visual transition between the rock and the slab. The large rocks placed on the Ajax Gulch side would be outside of the functional riparian area.

### c. Rock slide stabilization

A gabion barrier wall 42' long x 5' high filled with on-site small rocks would be constructed up against the hillside from the existing toilet north to the vertical bedrock wall. The purpose of this is to provide support at the toe of the rock slide thereby stabilizing the slide to some extent and to catch falling rocks. The gabion cages would be made with "earth tone" galvanized wire and would be filled "by hand". Onsite rocks would be used to blend the gabion wall with the existing character of the hillside and landing.

### d. Ajax Gulch trail crossing

From the new parking lot extension, the existing access trail crossing Ajax Gulch would be reinforced using large angular and round river run rock. Large rocks and smaller material from the site would be

arranged to form a low berm (approximately 10 feet long) between the existing slope face and the edge of the parking lot extension. This material would be outside the functional riparian area of the creek and would help prevent water from diverting out of the creek and down the parking lot. Where the trail crosses the Ajax Gulch creek channel, large river rock with flat faces would be placed to allow foot traffic across the creek during the winter when the stream is flowing. The rocks would be placed so that flows and the transport of streambed material could continue while still keeping the crossing intact during high water events. Placement of all material would be done during the dry season when the stream is not flowing and interception of subsurface water would be unlikely given the type of channel.

e. Garbage receptacles

Just north of the existing toilet structure, two vandal and flood resistant garbage receptacles would be installed. They would be secured into the concrete slab just off the parking area. These receptacles are made of concrete and would be of a color and texture that would match others used in recreation sites in the upstream recreational section of the river corridor.

f. Boat launch ramp expansion

Along the down river side of the existing concrete boat ramp where the existing gravel area is, a 6 - 8" reinforced concrete pad would be constructed to provide a better staging area for boaters. The total area of 1,168 ft<sup>2</sup> would require approximately 25 cubic yards of concrete. (See map and photo simulation "Grave Creek Parking area before/after.")

Along the upriver side of the existing concrete boat ramp where the existing gravel area is, a 6 - 8" reinforced concrete pad would be constructed to provide a better staging area for boaters. The total area of 3,730 ft<sup>2</sup> would require 75 cubic yards of concrete. (See map and photo simulation "Grave Creek Parking area before/after.")

Where concrete is poured, it would incorporate a reinforcing steel mesh (4" on center) to provide strength and prevent concrete deterioration over time. Construction and concrete pouring would be done in 2+ stages so that the launch area will remain open and available for use continuously. Freshly poured areas will be closed and cordoned off for periods of approximately 48 hours to allow the concrete to cure.

g. Parking restrictions

A portion of the existing parking areas would be posted as "No Parking" in order to reduce congestion at the landing and to allow for more vehicle-trailer maneuvering. Grave Creek Boat landing is signed for "no overnight parking".

3. Project Design Features for All Action Alternatives

Project design features (PDFs) are included for the purpose of reducing anticipated adverse environmental impacts which might stem from the implementation of the proposed action or alternatives. This section outlines these PDFs.

a. Project time frame

It is anticipated that implementation of the proposed work would be staged over a 1-3 year period as funding permits.

b. Season and timing of operations

To the extent possible, work would be accomplished during the off season for river recreation use. The project would be accomplished in stages so as not to disrupt the entire boat launching area and ramp at any given time. Operations would be precluded from occurring on weekends or holidays. In order to minimize potential sediment delivery to the river, work would not be conducted during the wet winter months which is typically between October 15 of one year and March 15 of the next year (some variation of this may occur depending on weather conditions and the work proposed).

All in-stream work would only be conducted during the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's (ODFW) preferred in-stream work period (June 15 through September 15) unless otherwise approved by ODFW. If conducted outside of these dates, it would only be conducted during low stream flow conditions.

In stream work will be seasonally restricted to the time of lowest water flow within the following period: June 15 - September 15.

c. Heavy equipment would be operated from the stream bank and would not be permitted to enter the wetted part of the river.

d. Wet concrete would not be allowed to come in contact with the flowing portion of the stream.

e. Limit activities of mechanized equipment in the stream channel to the area necessary.

f. Wildlife resource protection

For 2002, no seasonal restriction is required for peregrine falcons. If work is not completed in 2002, surveys will be required to determine nesting status prior to future project implementation. Depending upon nest location, a seasonal restriction (January 1- July 1) may be required for project activities involving the use of heavy equipment. If monitoring indicates the pair has abandoned their nesting efforts, project implementation can begin May 15.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Environmental Consequences**

#### **A. Introduction**

Only substantive site-specific environmental changes that would result from implementing the proposed action or alternatives are discussed in this chapter. If an ecological component is not discussed, it should be assumed that the resource specialists have considered affects to that component and found the proposed action or alternatives would have minimal or no affects. Similarly, unless addressed specifically, the following were found not to be affected by the proposed action or alternatives: air quality; areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC); cultural or historical resources; Native American religious sites; prime or unique farmlands; floodplains; endangered, threatened or sensitive plant, animal or fish species; water quality; wetlands/riparian zones; wild and scenic rivers; and wilderness areas. In addition, hazardous waste or materials are not directly involved in the proposed action or alternatives.

General or "typical" affects from projects similar in nature to the proposed action or alternatives are also described in the EISs and plans this EA is tiered to.

#### **B. Site Specific and Cumulative Beneficial or Adverse Effects of the Alternatives**

##### **1. Resource: Soil / Water**

###### **a. Affected Environment**

The areas proposed for paving are in the two year flood plain and the riparian reserve. These areas are very rocky and currently, highly modified, surfaced with fill material and do not support any vegetation.

Ajax Gulch, which flows through the downstream side of the project area and crosses the trailhead, is an intermittent stream. The trail crosses the alluvial fan of Ajax Gulch. The fan is made up of coarse material predominately angular cobble.

The Rogue River is water quality limited (303(d) listed) for warm summer temperatures and other qualities that are not applicable to this proposal.

###### **b. Environmental consequences**

The proposed actions will not cause an increase in temperature of the Rogue River, as no vegetation will be removed that would reduce temperature.

A small jetty (five feet wide by ten feet long) is proposed to be placed on the downstream side of and perpendicular to the boat ramp. This will result in the jetty pointing diagonally up stream. The purpose of the jetty is to counteract stream energy from eroding and undermining the corner of the ramp. The jetty may cause sediment to be deposited on the ramp during high flows.

Placement of boulders at the edge of the parking lot and at the intermittent stream crossing will have no sedimentation effect on the Rogue River as no excavation will be required. However, since this is an active alluvial fan, the intermittent stream will have a tendency to move because it is carrying coarse material and depositing it in the area of the trail. No vegetation on Ajax Gulch will be removed, therefore shade and water temperature will not be affected.

## **2. Resource: Wildlife**

### **a. Affected Environment**

The Grave Creek boat landing is a highly modified site with extensive ground disturbance associated with a paved parking area, access road, and boat landing. Outside of the parking area, ground conditions are characterized by river rock and sparse vegetation. The parking area and landing are subject to seasonal flooding which frequently moves material and modifies vegetation on the site. The boat landing receives high recreation use from May through September.

There are no known spotted owl, bald eagle or marbled murrelet nests within 0.25 miles of the Grave Creek boat landing. The boat landing is not considered suitable nesting habitat for bald eagles, spotted owls or marbled murrelets. However, there is suitable spotted owl nesting habitat within 0.25 miles of the boat landing.

The boat landing is not considered suitable habitat for red-tree voles, Del Norte salamanders or survey and manage mollusc species.

There is a historic peregrine falcon nest site within 0.5 miles of the boat landing. Monitoring for the 2002 season confirms that this peregrine pair is nesting on a ledge previously used in the past. In previous years, five different nest ledges have been utilized as nest locations by peregrines at this site. Historically, this peregrine falcon pair has had a 50% reproductive success rate. Many factors including disturbance, weather and egg shell thinning have contributed to low reproductive success rates.

### **b. Environmental Consequences**

For bald eagles, spotted owls and marbled murrelets, no impacts would be anticipated from the proposed action. Although there is suitable unsurveyed spotted owl habitat within 0.25 miles of the boat ramp, no seasonal restriction would be needed because the existing level of background noise

routinely associated with the boat ramp during the recreation season. The level of work associated with the proposed improvements would not likely exceed the existing level of background noise.

For peregrine falcons, the nest site is situated at a point visually buffered from the boat ramp. Topography at the site also minimizes the amount of sound intrusion expected from the boat ramp improvements. Based on this, improvements at the boat ramp implemented during the 2002 season are not anticipated to result in impacts to nesting peregrine falcons. During subsequent seasons, it is possible that the location of the nest ledge may change. If a nest ledge within line of site of the boat ramp is used, noise created by project implementation could disrupt to nesting peregrine falcons. Disturbance can result in nest site abandonment, egg breakage or altered foraging and feeding patterns.

### **3. Resource: Fisheries**

#### **a. Affected Environment**

The Rogue River has perennial flow and anadromous fish use. Coho salmon (which are federally listed as threatened) and coho critical habitat are present in the segment of the river adjacent to the project site. The areas proposed for paving, in order to improve the parking/turning area and the boat launch, are in the riparian reserve. These areas are currently surfaced with fill material and do not support any vegetation. The proposed actions will not cause a reduction of shade on the Rogue River, as no vegetation will be removed.

Ajax Gulch, which flows through the downstream side of the project area and crosses the trailhead, is an intermittent creek that does not support fish. Boulders will be placed at the edge of the parking lot to direct water away from the parking lot. Boulders will also be placed around the trail crossing on Ajax Gulch to decrease erosion on the trail. The placing of boulders will not create a mechanism for sediment, as no excavation will be required. No vegetation on Ajax Gulch will be removed, therefore shade will not be affected.

#### **b. Environmental Consequences**

No effects to fisheries or aquatic resources are anticipated from the proposed action. This determination includes short and long term, direct and indirect, and cumulative effects. Impacts have been considered temporally on the short term and long term scales, and spatially at the project/site and watershed scales. There will be no mechanisms for sediment delivery to the stream associated with the proposed action at the project level (7<sup>th</sup> field scale) or at the watershed level (5<sup>th</sup> field scale). The projects addressed in this EA are consistent with those included in the National Marine Fisheries Service's August 8, 2001 Biological Opinion for the Programmatic Actions regarding Coho Salmon Endangered Species Act consultation. The proposed action does not hinder the attainment of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy Objectives of the Northwest Forest Plan.

#### **4. Resource: Botanical**

##### **a. Affected Environment / Environmental Consequences**

The areas of improvement and road maintenance for this project have been previously disturbed. Very little vegetation exists due to vehicle traffic. Therefore, no special status or survey and manage species or their habitat will be affected by this project. While within the range of the federally listed, *Fritillaria gentneri*, no habitat for this species exists in the project area.

#### **5. Resource: Recreation / Social / VRM**

##### **a. Affected Environment.**

Grave Creek boat ramp is located within the Wild Section of the Rogue Wild and Scenic River. It is, however, located at the end of the Hellgate Recreation Section of the Rogue. It is the terminus for recreation section float trips and the starting point for wild section trips. This dual function can create a high degree of congestion on busy summer days when it is being used as a take out as well as a put in.

##### **b. Environmental Consequences.**

The wild section designation imposes some limits the kinds of activities and facilities that can occur. The 1972 Management Plan states on page 13414 ¶ 7:

##### *Wild Section*

*(1) Public Recreation Developments and Resource Improvements: Design and locate improvements so they are as inconspicuous as possible and in harmony with the environment.*

Consequently improvements are not prohibited in this section of river. The design of this project meets the objectives of this requirement. These improvements will also help reduce conflicts at the boat ramp and make both recreation section and wild section users more satisfied.

The area surrounding the grave Creek Boat Ramp is VRM class 1. Objectives are “to preserve the existing character of the landscape.” The level of change should be very low and must not attract attention. The nature of the area is already heavily developed with roads and the Grave Creek Bridge (also in the wild section). The proposed improvements would be consistent with the applicable VRM objectives.

#### **6. Resource: Cultural**



a. Affected Environment.

There are no known cultural sites at this location. All construction is located in areas that have been previously disturbed either by the natural forces of the river or by humankind.

b. Environmental Consequences.

No effects identified.

**7. Resource: Roads and engineering**

a. Environmental consequences

Surfacing of the parking area will stabilize the parking area surface and thereby reducing the need for annual maintenance. It will also provide additional area for access and short term parking and staging thereby reducing periods of congestion while launching and retrieving boats.

Installation of the gabions will reduce the amount of rubble deposited in the parking area from up slope. There will be a consequent reduction of annual maintenance needs. The gabions will also provide for increased safety as they will provide a barrier or a catch basin effect for sloughing rocks.

Staging the pouring of the concrete surface will result in short term increases in launch area congestion while the concrete is poured and allowed to cure.

*Safety:* The proposed widening and guard rail on the access road would help eliminate the hazards of the narrow road and potential for vehicles to accidentally slide off the steep drop off.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Agencies and Persons Consulted**

#### **A. Public Involvement**

Formal public scoping of the proposed action was conducted in July - August 2001. The principal issues raised are summarized in Chapter 1 of this EA and some are addressed in Appendix A.

A formal 15 day public comment period will be held for public review and comment of the EA and project proposals.

Comments about the Grave Creek Landing have been received from the public in the past. They have expressed concern about safety of different features and conditions at the landing site.

Three public comments addressing boat ramps were received during the comment period for the Hellgate Section Recreation Activity Management Plan. All of the comments supported improving the existing boat launching sites and addressing the congestion that often occurs at these sites.

#### **B. Agencies Consulted**

Permits for the proposed work will be required from the Division of Public Lands and Army Corps of Engineers. The project and permitting has been discussed with these agencies during project design. Permits will be obtained prior to project implementation.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon State Marine Board have been consulted during the project design. ODFW recommendations have been included in the project's design. Josephine County will be consulted during the permit process.

#### **C. Availability of Document and Comment Procedures**

Copies of the EA document will be available for formal public review in the BLM Medford District Office. The EA will be posted on the Medford District's web site and sent to parties known to have an interest in this project. Written comments concerning the EA will be accepted for 15 days after publication of a notice of availability in the Grants Pass Daily Courier newspaper.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Issues / Alternatives Considered But Eliminated From Consideration / Analysis**

*Issue: A comment received during the public scoping period questioned whether or not having a landing, such as the Grave Creek Landing, within a Wild Section of a National Wild & Scenic River was consistent with the mandates of the W&S Rivers Act.*

The Grave Creek landing access road, concreted parking area and boat launch all predate the 1968 designation of the Rogue River as a component of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. The Act's definition of a "Wild River Area" states that pre-established improvements are permitted provided there effects are limited to the immediate vicinity. The proposed action is consistent with this definition.

*Issue: A comment received during the public scoping period suggested that if addition parking was provided and the boat staging areas were improved it would lead to additional visitor use of the Grave Creek Boat Landing and the Hellgate Recreational Section of the river.*

The proposed expansion of the parking areas would be partly offset by posting a portion of the existing parking area as "No Parking" thereby allowing for more vehicle-trailer maneuvering and less congestion. Currently the boat staging areas are being used at near capacity. The proposed design improvements to the existing staging areas would increase that capacity very little and would provide a safer and more efficient work area for users preparing to launch a Wild Section river trip or ending their river trip off the Recreation Section.

*Alternative considered but eliminated: An alternative of using large boulders instead of gabion baskets at the toe of the slide area was considered as a method of reducing visual impact. This alternative was eliminated due to the fact that boulders large enough to withstand high water flows and to stay where placed would exceed equipment capabilities to move and place them. The visual impact of gabions was determined to not be a major visual impact issue and that they would, overall blend with the onsite rock material. It was also eliminated based on the conclusion that large rocks would be less effective at anchoring the slide area.*

*Alternative considered but eliminated: Congestion at the launch area is often the result of recreationists leaving vehicles for shuttle drivers to pick up at a later time. An alternative of either requiring or requesting that this type of parking be done elsewhere was considered. It was deferred for consideration during the upcoming Wild Section Activity planning effort.*